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## Books by James Whitcomb Riley



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THE RAGGEDY MAN (Pictures by Betts)

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY

From the Portrait by John S. Sargent
In the John Herron Art Institute, Indianapolis

# MORNING

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY

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# MORNING

TO

MEREDITH NICHOLSON

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# MORNING

## MORNING

Breath of Morning—breath of May—
With your zest of yesterday
And crisp, balmy freshness, smite
Our old hearts with Youth's delight.

Tilt the cap of Boyhood—yea,
Where no "forelock" waves, to-day,—
Back, in breezy, cool excess,
Stroke it with the old caress.

Let us see as we have seen—
Where all paths are dewy-green,
And all human-kind are kin—
Let us be as we have been!

## SIS RAPALYE

When rainy-greener shoots the grass
And blooms the cherry-tree,
And children laugh by glittering brooks,
Wild with the ecstasy
Of bursting Spring, with twittering bird
And hum of honey-bee,—
"Sis Rapalye!" my spirit shouts . . .
And she is here with me!

As laugh the children, so her laugh
Haunts all the atmosphere;—
Her song is in the brook's refrain;
Her glad eyes, flashing clear,
Are in the morning dews; her speech
Is melody so dear,
The bluebird trills,—"Sis Rapalye!—
I hear!—I hear!—I hear!"

Again in races, at "Recess,"
I see her braided hair
Toss past me as I stay to lift
Her straw hat, fallen there;

The school-bell sends a vibrant pang
  My heart can hardly bear.—
Yet still she leads—Sis Rapalye—
  And leads me everywhere!

Now I am old.—Yet she remains
  The selfsame child of ten.—
Gay, gallant little girl, to race
  On into Heaven then!
Yet gallant, gay Sis Rapalye—
  In blossom-time, and when
The trees and grasses beckon her—
  Comes back to us again.

And so, however long since youth
  Whose raptures wild and free
An old man's heart may claim no more,—
  With more than memory
I share the Spring's own joy that brings
  My boyhood back to me
With laughter, blossoms, singing birds
  And sweet Sis Rapalye.

## THE LOVELINESS

Ah, what a long and loitering way
And ever-lovely way, in truth,
We travel on from day to day
Out of the realms of youth!

How eagerly we onward press
The lovely path that lures us still
With ever-changing loveliness
Of grassy vale and hill:

Of groves of May and morning-lands
Dew-diamonded and gemmed with bloom;
With amber streams and golden sands
And aisles of gleam and gloom;

Where lovely little Fairy-folk,
In careless ambush, pipe and call
From tousled ferns neath elm and oak
By shoal and waterfall:

Transparent even as the stream,
The gnarlèd prison-tree reveals
Its lovely Dryad in a dream
That scarce itself conceals;

The sudden redbird trips the sight
And tricks the ear—or doubtless we
With happy palms had clapped the Sprite
In new captivity.

On—on, through all the gathering years,
Still gleams the loveliness, though seen
Through dusks of loss and mists of tears
That vainly intervene.

Time stints us not of lovely things—
Old Age hath still a treasure-store,—
The loveliness of songs and wings
And voices on before.—

And—loveliness beyond all grace
Of lovely words to say or sing,—
The loveliness of Hope's fair face
Forever brightening.

## THE QUEST OF THE FATHERS

WHAT were our Forefathers trying to find
When they weighed anchor, that desperate hour
They turned from home, and the warning wind
Sighed in the sails of the old Mayflower?
What sought they that could compensate
Their hearts for the loved ones left behind—
The household group at the glowing grate?—
What were our Forefathers trying to find?

What were they trying to find more dear
Than their native land and its annals old,—
Its throne—its church—and its worldly cheer—
Its princely state, and its hoarded gold?
What more dear than the mounds of green
There o'er the brave sires, slumbering long?
What more fair than the rural scene—
What more sweet than the throstle's song?

Faces pallid, but sternly set,
Lips locked close, as in voiceless prayer,
And eyes with never a teardrop wet—
Even the tenderest woman's there!

But O the light from the soul within,
As each spake each with a flashing mind—
As the lightning speaks to its kith and kin!
What were our Forefathers trying to find?

Argonauts of a godless day—
Seers of visions, and dreamers vain!
Their ship's foot set in a pathless way,—
The fogs, the mists, and the blinding rain!—
When the gleam of sun, and moon and star
Seemed lost so long they were half forgot—
When the fixed eyes found nor near nor far,
And the night whelmed all, and the world was not.

And yet, befriended in some strange wise,
They groped their way in the storm and stress
Through which—though their look found not the skies—
The Lord's look found *them* ne'ertheless—
Found them, yea, in their piteous lot,
As they in their faith from the first divined—
Found them, and favored them—too. But what—
What were our Forefathers trying to find?

Numb and agasp, with the frost for breath,
They came on a frozen shore, at last,
As bleak and drear as the coasts of death,—
And yet their psalm o'er the wintry blast
Rang glad as though 'twere the chiming mirth
Of jubilant children landing there—
Until o'er all of the icy earth
The snows seemed warm, as they knelt in prayer.

For, lo! they were close on the trail they sought:—
In the sacred soil of the rights of men
They marked where the Master-hand had wrought;
And there they garnered and sowed again.—
*Their* land—then *ours,* as to-day it is,
With its flag of heaven's own light designed,
And God's vast love o'er all. . . . And *this*
Is what our Forefathers were trying to find.

## THE GREAT GOD PAN

*"What was he doing, the great god Pan?"*
*—Mrs. Browning.*

O Pan is the goodliest god, I wist,
Of all of the lovable gods that be!—
For his two strong hands were the first to twist
From the depths of the current, through spatter and mist,
The long-hushed reeds that he pressed in glee
To his murmurous mouth, as he chuckled and kissed
Their souls into melody.

And the wanton winds are in love with Pan:
They loll in the shade with him day by day;
And betimes as beast, and betimes as man,
They love him as only the wild winds can,—
Or sleeking the coat of his limbs one way,
Or brushing his brow with the locks they fan
To the airs he loves to play.

And he leans by the river, in gloom and gleam,
  Blowing his reeds as the breezes blow—
His cheeks puffed out, and his eyes in a dream,
And his hoof-tips, over the leaves in the stream,
  Tapping the time of the tunes that flow
As sweet as the drowning echoes seem
  To his rollicking wraith below.

## ON READING DR. HENRY VAN DYKE'S VOLUME OF POEMS—MUSIC

Music!—Yea, and the airs you play—
Out of the faintest Far-Away
And the sweetest, too; and the dearest Here,
With its quavering voice but its bravest cheer—
The prayer that aches to be all expressed—
The kiss of love at its tenderest:
Music—music, with glad heart-throbs
Within it; and music with tears and sobs
Shaking it, as the startled soul
Is shaken at shriek of the fife and roll
Of the drums;—then as suddenly lulled again
With the whisper and lisp of the summer rain:
Mist of melodies fragrance-fine—
The birdsong flicked from the eglantine
With the dews when the springing bramble
throws
A rarer drench on its ripest rose,
And the wingèd song soars up and sinks
To the dove's dim coo by the river-brinks

Where the ripple's voice still laughs along
Its glittering path of light and song.
Music, O Poet, and all your own
By right of capture and that alone,—
For in it we hear the harmony
Born of the earth and the air and the sea,
And over and under it, and all through,
We catch the chime of The Anthem, too.

## LONGFELLOW

### 1807—February 27—1907

O gentlest kinsman of Humanity!
Thy love hath touched all hearts, even as thy Song
Hath touched all chords of music that belong
To the quavering heaven-strung harp of harmony:
Thou hast made man to feel and hear and see
Divinely;—made the weak to be the strong;
By thy melodious magic, changed the wrong
To changeless right—and joyed and wept as we.
Worlds listen, lulled and solaced at the spell
That folds and holds us—soul and body, too,—
As though thy songs, as loving arms in stress
Of sympathy and trust ineffable,
Were thrown about us thus by one who knew
Our common human need of kindliness.

## LAUGHING SONG

Sing us something full of laughter;
Tune your harp, and twang the strings
Till your glad voice, chirping after,
Mates the song the robin sings:
Loose your lips and let them flutter
Like the wings of wanton birds,—
Though they naught but laughter utter,
Laugh, and we'll not miss the words.

Sing in ringing tones that mingle
In a melody that flings
Joyous echoes in a jingle
Sweeter than the minstrel sings:
Sing of Winter, Spring or Summer,
Clang of war, or low of herds;
Trill of cricket, roll of drummer—
Laugh, and we'll not miss the words.

## LAUGHING SONG

Like the lisping laughter glancing
From the meadow brooks and springs,
Or the river's ripples dancing
To the tune the current sings—
Sing of Now, and the Hereafter;
Let your glad song, like the birds',
Overflow with limpid laughter—
Laugh, and we'll not miss the words.

## A GOLDEN WEDDING

[DECEMBER—1884]

YOUR Golden Wedding!—fifty years
Of comradeship, through smiles and tears!—
Through summer sun, and winter sleet,
You walked the ways with willing feet;
For, journeying together thus,
Each path held something glorious.
No winter wind could blow so chill
But found you even warmer still
In fervor of affection—blest
In knowing all was for the best;
And so, content, you faced the storm
And fared on, smiling, arm-in-arm.

But why this moralizing strain
Beside a hearth that glows again
As on your *Wooden* wedding day?—
When butter-prints and paddles lay

Around in dough-bowls, tubs and churns,
And all such "woodenish" concerns;
And "woodenish" they are—for now
Who can afford to keep a cow
And pestle some old churn, when you
Can buy good butter—"golden", too—
Far cheaper than you can afford
To make it and neglect the Lord!

And round your hearth the faces gleam
That may recall, as in a dream,
The brightness of a time when *Tin*
Came glittering and clanging in
And raising noise enough to seize
And settle any swarm of bees!
But those were darling times, no doubt,—
To see the mother pouring out
The "tins" of milk, and tilting up
The coffee-pot above each cup;
Or, with the ladle from the wall,
Dipping and serving mush for all.

And *all* the "weddings", as they came,—
The *"Glass"*, the *"China"*,—still the same

You see them, till the last ere this,—
The *"Silver"*,—and your wedded bliss
Abated not!—for love appears
Just silvered over with the years:—
Silver the grandchild's laugh you hear—
Silver his hopes, and silver-clear
Your every prayer for him,—and still
Silver your hope, through good and ill—
Silver and silver everywhere,
Bright as the silver of your hair!

But on your *Golden* Wedding!—Nay—
What can I give to you to-day
Who am too very poor indeed
To offer what I so much need?
If gold I gave, I fear, alack!
I'd needs provide you gave it back,
To stay me, the long years before
I'd stacked and heaped five dollars more!
And so, in lieu—and little worse—
I proffer you this dross of verse—
The merest tinsel, I admit,—
But take it—I have more of it.

## A PARTING GUEST

WHAT delightful hosts are they—
Life and Love!
Lingeringly I turn away,
This late hour, yet glad enough
They have not withheld from me
Their high hospitality.
So, with face lit with delight
And all gratitude, I stay
Yet to press their hands and say,
"Thanks.—So fine a time! Good night."

## THE OLD DAYS

The old days—the far days—
The ever dear and fair!—
The old days—the lost days—
How lovely they were!
The old days of Morning,
With the dew-drench on the flowers
And apple-buds and blossoms
Of those old days of ours.

Then was the *real* gold
Spendthrift Summer flung;
Then was the *real* song
Bird or Poet sung!
There was never censure then,—
Only honest praise—
And all things were worthy of it
In the old days.

There bide the true friends—
  The first and the best;
There clings the green grass
  Close where they rest:
Would they were here? No;—
  Would we were there! . . .
The old days—the lost days—
  How lovely they were!

## EVEN AS A CHILD

CANTON, SEPTEMBER 19, 1901

EVEN as a child to whom sad neighbors speak
In symbol, saying that his father "sleeps"—
Who feels their meaning, even as his cheek
Feels the first teardrop as it stings and leaps—
Who keenly knows his loss, and yet denies
Its awful import—grieves unreconciled,
Moans, drowses—rouses, with new-drowning eyes—
Even as a child.

Even as a child; with empty, aimless hand
Clasped sudden to the heart all hope deserts—
With tears that blur all lights on sea or land—
The lip that quivers and the throat that hurts:
Even so, the Nation that has known his love
Is orphaned now; and, whelmed in anguish wild,
Knows but its sorrow and the ache thereof,
Even as a child.

## THE SOLDIER

THE DEDICATION OF THE SOLDIERS AND SAILORS MONUMENT, INDIANAPOLIS, MAY 15, 1902

THE SOLDIER!—meek the title, yet divine:
  Therefore, with reverence, as with wild acclaim,
We fain would honor in exalted line
  The glorious lineage of the glorious name:
The Soldier.—Lo, he ever was, and is,
  Our Country's high custodian, by right
Of patriot blood that brims that heart of his
  With fiercest love, yet honor infinite.

The Soldier—within whose inviolate care
  The Nation takes repose,—her inmost fane
Of Freedom ever has its guardian there,
  As have her forts and fleets on land and main:
The Heavenward Banner, as its ripples stream
  In happy winds, or float in languid flow,
Through silken meshes ever sifts the gleam
  Of sunshine on its Sentinel below.

The Soldier!—Why, the very utterance
Is music—as of rallying bugles, blent
With blur of drums and cymbals and the chants
Of battle-hymns that shake the continent!—
The thunder-chorus of a world is stirred
To awful, universal jubilee,—
Yet ever through it, pure and sweet, are heard
The prayers of Womanhood, and Infancy.

Even as a fateful tempest sudden loosed
Upon our senses, so our thoughts are blown
Back where The Soldier battled, nor refused
A grave all nameless in a clime unknown.—
The Soldier—though, perchance, worn, old and gray;
The Soldier—though, perchance, the merest lad,—
The Soldier—though he gave his life away,
Hearing the shout of "Victory," was glad;

Aye, glad and grateful, that in such a cause
His veins were drained at Freedom's holy shrine—
Rechristening the land—as first it was,—
His blood poured thus in sacramental sign

Of new baptism of the hallowed name
"My Country"—now on every lip once more
And blest of God with still enduring fame.—
This thought even then The Soldier gloried
o'er—

The dying eyes upraised in rapture there,—
As, haply, he remembered how a breeze
Once swept his boyish brow and tossed his hair,
Under the fresh bloom of the orchard-trees—
When his heart hurried, in some wistful haste
Of ecstasy, and his quick breath was wild
And balmy-sharp and chilly-sweet to taste,—
And he towered godlike, though a trembling
child!

Again, through luminous mists, he saw the skies'
Far fields white-tented; and in gray and blue
And dazzling gold, he saw vast armies rise
And fuse in fire—from which, in swiftest view,
The Old Flag soared, and friend and foe as one
Blent in an instant's vivid mirage . . . Then
The eyes closed smiling on the smiling sun
That changed the seer to a child again.—

And, even so, The Soldier slept.—Our own!—
The Soldier of our plaudits, flowers and
tears,—
O this memorial of bronze and stone—
His love shall outlast *this* a thousand years!
Yet, as the towering symbol bids us do,—
With soul saluting, as salutes the hand,
We answer as The Soldier answered to
The Captain's high command.

## HIS HEART OF CONSTANT YOUTH

*"And I never hear the drums beat*
*that I do not think of him."*
*—Major Charles L. Holstein.*

Turn through his life, each word and deed
Now sacred as it is—
How helped and soothed we are to read
A history like his!

To turn the years, in far review,
And find him—as To-day—
In orchard-lands of bloom and dew
Again a boy at play:

The jeweled grass—the sumptuous trees
And flower and fragrance there,
With song of birds and drone of bees
And Springtime everywhere:

Turn any chapter that we will,
  Read any page, in sooth,
We find his glad heart owning still
  The freshness of his youth.

With such a heart of tender care
  He loved his own, and thus
His home was, to the loved ones there,
  A temple glorious.

And, ever youthful, still his love
  Enshrined, all manifold,
The people—all the poor thereof,
  The helpless and the old.

And little children—Ah! to them
  His love was as the sun
Wrought in a magic diadem
  That crowned them, everyone.

And ever young his reverence for
  The laws: like morning-dew
He shone as counsel, orator,
  And clear logician, too.

And, as a boy, his gallant soul
  Made answer to the trill
Of battle-trumpet and the roll
  Of drums that echo still:

His comrades—as his country, dear—
  They knew, and ever knew
That buoyant, boyish love, sincere
  As truth itself is true:

He marched with them, in tireless tramp—
  Laughed, cheered and lifted up
The battle-chorus, and in camp
  Shared blanket, pipe and cup.

His comrades! . . . When you meet again,
  In anguish though you bow,
Remember how he loved you then,
  And how he loves you *now*.

## THE DOCTOR

[April 29, 1907]

*"He took the suffering human race,*
*He read each wound, each weakness clear;*
*And struck his finger on the place,*
*And said: 'Thou ailest here, and here!'"*
*—Matthew Arnold.*

We may idealize the chief of men—
Idealize the humblest citizen,—
Idealize the ruler in his chair—
The poor man, or the poorer millionaire;
Idealize the soldier—sailor—or
The simple man of peace—at war with war;—
The hero of the sword or fife-and-drum. . . .
Why not idealize the Doctor some?

The Doctor is, by principle, we know,
Opposed to sentiment: he veils all show
Of feeling, and is proudest when he hides
The sympathy which natively abides

Within the stoic precincts of a soul
Which owns strict duty as its first control,
And so must guard the ill, lest worse may
come. . . .
Why not idealize the Doctor some?

He is the master of emotions—he
Is likewise certain of that mastery,—
Or dare he face contagion in its ire,
Or scathing fever in its leaping fire?
He needs must smile upon the ghastly face
That yearns up toward him in that warded place
Where even the Saint-like Sisters' lips grow
dumb.
Why not idealize the Doctor some?

He wisely hides his heart from you and me—
He hath grown tearless, of necessity,—
He knows the sight is clearer, being blind;
He knows the cruel knife is very kind;
Ofttimes he must be pitiless, for thought
Of the remembered wife or child he sought
To save through kindness that was overcome.
Why not idealize the Doctor some?

Bear with him, trustful, in his darkest doubt
Of how the mystery of death comes out;
He knows—he knows,—aye, better yet than we,
That out of Time must dawn Eternity;
He knows his own compassion—what *he* would
Give in relief of all ills, if he could.—
We wait alike one Master: He will come.
Do we idealize the Doctor some?

## "OUT OF REACH"?

You think them "out of reach," your dead?
Nay, by my own dead, I deny
Your "out of reach."—Be comforted:
'Tis not so far to die.

O by their dear remembered smiles
And outheld hands and welcoming speech,
They wait for us, thousands of miles
This side of "out-of-reach."

## MY FOE

My Foe? You name yourself, then,—I refuse
A term so dark to designate you by.
To me you are most kind and true; and I
Am grateful as the dust is for the dews
That brim the dusk, and falter, drip and ooze
From the dear darkness of the summer sky.
Vex not yourself for lack of moan or cry
Of mine. Not any harm, nor ache nor bruise
Could reach my soul through any stroke you fain
Might launch upon me,—it were as the lance
Even of the lightning did it leap to rend
A ray of sunshine—'twould recoil again.
So, blessing you, with pitying countenance,
I wave a hand to you, my helpless friend.

## THE RAINY MORNING

THE DAWN of the day was dreary,
And the lowering clouds o'erhead
Wept in a silent sorrow
Where the sweet sunshine lay dead;
And a wind came out of the eastward
Like an endless sigh of pain,
And the leaves fell down in the pathway
And writhed in the falling rain.

I had tried in a brave endeavor
To chord my harp with the sun,
But the strings would slacken ever,
And the task was a weary one:
And so, like a child impatient
And sick of a discontent,
I bowed in a shower of teardrops
And mourned with the instrument.

And lo! as I bowed, the splendor
Of the sun bent over me,
With a touch as warm and tender
As a father's hand might be:
And, even as I felt its presence,
My clouded soul grew bright,
And the tears, like the rain of morning,
Melted in mists of light.

## TO EDMUND CLARENCE STEDMAN

THE AUTHORS CLUB RECEPTION, NEW YORK, DECEMBER 6, 1900

IT IS a various tribute you command,
O Poet-seer and World-sage in one!—
The scholar greets you; and the student; and
The stoic—and his visionary son:
The painter, harvesting with quiet eye
Your features; and the sculptor, dreaming, too,
A classic marble figure, lifted high
Where Fame's immortal ones are waiting you.

The man of letters, with his wistful face;
The grizzled scientist; the young A. B.;
The true historian, of force and grace;
The orator, of pure simplicity;
The journalist—the editor, likewise;
The young war-correspondent; and the old
War-seasoned general, with sagging eyes,
And nerve and hand of steel, and heart of gold.

The serious humorist; the blithe divine;
The lawyer, with that twinkling look he wears;
The bleak-faced man in the dramatic line;
The social lion—and the bulls and bears;
These—these, and more, O favored guest of all,
Have known your benefactions, and are led
To pay their worldly homage, and to call
Down Heaven's blessings on your honored
head.

Ideal, to the utmost plea of art—
As real, to labor's most exacting need,—
Your dual services of soul and heart
Enrich the world alike in dream and deed:
For you have brought to us, from out the mine
Delved but by genius in scholastic soil,
The blended treasures of a wealth divine,—
Your peerless gift of song—your life of toil.

## THE COUNTRY EDITOR

A THOUGHTFUL brow and face—of sallow hue,
But warm with welcome, as we find him there,
Throned in his old misnomered "easy chair,"
Scrawling a "leader," or a book-review;
Or staring through the roof for something new
With which to lift a wretched rival's hair,
Or blow some petty clique in empty air
And snap the party-ligaments in two.
A man he is deserving well of thee,—
So be compassionate—yea, pay thy dues,
Nor pamper him with thy spring-poetry,
But haul him wood, or something he can use;
And promptly act, nor tarry long when he
Gnaweth his pen and glareth rabidly.

## AN EMPTY NEST

I FIND an old deserted nest,
  Half-hidden in the underbrush:
A withered leaf, in phantom jest,
  Has nestled in it like a thrush
With weary, palpitating breast.

I muse as one in sad surprise
  Who seeks his childhood's home once more,
And finds it in a strange disguise
  Of vacant rooms and naked floor,
With sudden teardrops in his eyes.

An empty nest! It used to bear
  A happy burden, when the breeze
Of summer rocked it, and a pair
  Of merry tattlers told the trees
What treasures they had hidden there.

But Fancy, flitting through the gleams
  Of youth's sunshiny atmosphere,
Has fallen in the past, and seems,
  Like this poor leaflet nestled here,—
A phantom guest of empty dreams.

## HIS LAST PICTURE

The skies have grown troubled and dreary;
The clouds gather fold upon fold;
The hand of the painter is weary
And the pencil has dropped from its hold:
The easel still leans in the grasses,
And the palette beside on the lawn,
But the rain o'er the sketch as it passes
Weeps low—for the artist is gone.

The flowers whose fairy-like features
Smiled up in his own as he wrought
And the leaves and the ferns were his teachers,
And the tints of the sun what they taught;
The low-swinging vines, and the mosses—
The shadow-filled boughs of the trees,
And the blossomy spray as it tosses
The song of the bird to the breeze.

The silent white laugh of the lily
He learned; and the smile of the rose
Glowed back on his spirit until he
Had mastered the blush as it glows;
And his pencil has touched and caressed them,
And kissed them, through breaths of perfume,
To the canvas that yet shall have blessed them
With years of unwithering bloom.

Then come!—Leave his palette and brushes
And easel there, just as his hand
Has left them, ere through the dark hushes
Of death, to the shadowy land,
He wended his way, happy-hearted
As when, in his youth, his rapt eyes
Swept the pathway of Fame where it started,
To where it wound into the skies.

## HENRY IRVING

[October 13, 1905]

'Tis Art reclaims him! By those gifts of hers
With which so nobly she endowed his mind,
He brought back Shakespeare, in quick grief and glee—
Tasting the world's salt tears and sweet applause,—
For, even as through his master's, so there ran
Through all his multitudinous characters
Kinship and love and honor of mankind.
So all mankind shall grace his memory
In musing proudly: Great as his genius was,
Great likewise was the man.

## THE VOICE OF PEACE

### Independence Bell:
### Indianapolis, November 17, 1904

Though now forever still
  Your voice of jubilee—
We hear—we hear, and ever will,
  The Bell of Liberty!
Clear as the voice to them
  In that far night agone
Pealed from the heavens o'er Bethlehem,
  The voice of Peace peals on!

Stir all your memories up,
  O Independence Bell,
And pour from your inverted cup
  The song we love so well!
As you rang in the dawn
  Of Freedom—tolled the knell
Of Tyranny,—ring on—ring on—
  O Independence Bell!

Ring numb the wounds of wrong
  Unhealed in brain and breast;
With music like a slumber-song
  Lull tearful eyes to rest.—
Ring! Independence Bell!
  Ring on till worlds to be
Shall listen to the tale you tell
  Of Love and Liberty!

## SOME IMITATIONS

### I

#### POMONA

(*Madison Cawein*)

Oh, the golden afternoon!—
  Like a ripened summer day
That had fallen oversoon
  In the weedy orchard-way—
As an apple, ripe in June.

He had left his fishrod leant
  O'er the footlog by the spring—
Clomb the hill-path's high ascent,
  Whence a voice, down showering,
Lured him, wondering as he went.

Not the voice of bee nor bird,
  Nay, nor voice of man nor child,
Nor the creek's shoal-alto heard
  Blent with warblings sweet and wild
Of the midstream, music-stirred.

'Twas a goddess! As the air
  Swirled to eddying silence, he
Glimpsed about him, half aware
  Of some subtle sorcery
Woven round him everywhere.

Suavest slopes of pleasaunce, sown
  With long lines of fruited trees
Weighed o'er grasses all unmown
  But by scythings of the breeze
In prone swaths that flashed and shone

Like silk locks of Faunus sleeked
  This, that way, and contrawise,
Thro' whose bredes ambrosial leaked
  Oily amber sheens and dyes,
Starred with petals purple-freaked.

Here the bellflower swayed and swung,
  Greenly belfried high amid
Thick leaves in whose covert sung
  Hermit-thrush, or katydid,
Or the glowworm nightly clung.

Here the damson, peach and pear;
  There the plum, in Tyrian tints,
Like great grapes in clusters rare;
  And the metal-heavy quince
Like a plummet dangled there.

All etherial, yet all
  Most material,—a theme
Of some fabled festival—
  Save the fair face of his dream
Smiling o'er the orchard wall.

## II

### THE PASSING OF A ZEPHYR

*(Sidney Lanier)*

Up from, and out of, and over the opulent woods
and the plains,
Lo! I leap nakedly loose, as the nudest of gods
might choose,
For to dash me away through the morning dews
And the rathe Spring rains—
Pat and pet the little green leaves of the trees and
the grass,
Till they seem to linger and cling, as I pass,
And are touched to delicate contemporaneous
tears of the rain and the dew,
That lure mine eyes to weeping likewise, and to
laughter, too:
For I am become as the balmiest, stormiest
zephyr of Spring,
With manifold beads of the marvelous dew and
the rain to string
On the bended strands of the blossoms, blown
And tossed and tousled and overthrown,

And shifted and whirled, and lifted unfurled
In the victory of the blossoming
Of the flags of the flowery world.
Yea, and behold! and a riotous zephyr, at last,
I subside; I abate; I pass by; I am past.
And the small, hoarse bass of the bumble-bee
Is my requiem-psalm,
And I fling me down to a listless, loitering, long
eternity
Of amiable calm.

## III

### EF UNCLE REMUS PLEASE TER 'SCUSEN ME

(*Joel Chandler Harris*)

Dey wunce wuz er time which I gwineter tell you
'bout it—
An' it's easy ter believe it sho'ly ez it is ter doubt
it!—

So des you pick yer "ruthers" whilse I tell how
ole Br'er Rabbit
Wunce know de time when he git de fightin'
habit.
Co'se he ain't no bragger, des a-rippin' an'
a-rarin'
An' a-darin' all de beestus an' a-des a-double-
darin'
Sich ez Mr. Jonus Lion, er Sir Mr. Twister
Tagger,
Er Sister Hisstopottomus, er A'nt Ferjinny
Ja'gger!
Yit, des de same, he layin' low an' know he got de
muscle
What sho' ter s'prise mos' any size what crowd
'im fer a tussle.—
But speshully he 'spise de *Dawg,* an' sight 'er one
des make 'im
Fergit hisse'f an' run 'em down an' grab 'em up
an' shake 'em!—
An', mo' 'n dat, ef 'twuzn't fer de Dawg-law den
ag'in it,
He'd des a-kilt off ev'y Dawg dat's chasin' him
dis minute!

## IV

### A RHYME FOR CHRISTMAS

If *Browning* only were here,
This yule-ish time o' the year—
This mule-ish time o' the year,
Stubbornly still refusing
To add to the rhymes we've been using
Since the first Christmas-glee
(One might say) chantingly
Rendered by rudest hinds
Of the pelt-clad shepherding kinds
Who didn't know Song from b-
U-double-l's-foot!—pah!—
(Haply the old Egyptian *ptah*—
Though I'd hardly wager a baw-
Bee—or a *bumble,* for that—
And that's flat!) . . . . . .
But the thing that I want to get at
Is a rhyme for *Christmas*—
Nay! nay! nay! nay! not *isthmus*—
The t- and the h-sounds covertly are
Gnawing the nice auricular

Senses until one may hear them gnar—
And the terminal, too, for m*a*s is m*u*s,
So *that* will not do for us.
Try for it—sigh for it—cry for it—die for it!
O *but* if Browning were here to apply for it,
*He'd* rhyme you *Christmas*—
*He'd* make a *mist pass*
Over—something o' ruther—
Or find you the rhyme's very brother
In lovers that *kissed fast*
*To baffle the moon*—as he'd lose the *t*-final
In fas-t as it blended with *to* (mark the spinal
Elision—tip-clipt as exquisitely nicely
And hyper-exactingly sliced to precisely
The extremest technical need): Or he'd *twist glass,*
Or he'd have a *kissed lass,*
Or shake 'neath our noses some great giant *fist-mass*—
No matter! If Robert were here, *he* could do it,
Though it took us till Christmas next year to see through it.

## V

## Vaudeville Skits

### I

### SERENADE AT THE CABIN

Oh, my little Sadie Sue, I's a-serenadin' you—
Fer you's de onliest lady-love o' mine;
De White Folk's dance done over, I has still a chune er two
Below your winder's mohnin'-glory-vine.
Your good ole mammy's gyarden is, fer shore, a ha'nted place,
Dis midnight whilse I's cropin' 'mongst de bloom;
Yit de moon dah 'bove de chimbly ain' no fairer dan de face
What's hidin' 'hind de curtain o' your room.

*Chorus*

Den wake, my colored blonde with eyes o' blue,
An' lips ez red ez roses renshed with dew;
Yo' hair ez fair an' fine
Ez de skeins o' June sunshine,
My little, light-complected Sadie Sue!

In de "Gran's" old dinin'-hall, playin' fer de
White Folk's ball,
I watch deir pick o' ladies ez dey glide,
An' says I, "My Sadie Sue she 'ud shorely best
you all
Ef she 'uz here a-waltzin' by my side!"
Den I laugh all to myse'f-like, ez I swipe de
twangin' strings
An' shet my eyes in sweetest dreams o' you,—
Fer yo're my heart's own music dat forever
beats an' sings—
My soul's own serenade—my Sadie Sue!

*Chorus*

Den wake, my colored blonde with eyes o' blue,
An' lips ez red ez roses renshed with dew;
Yo' hair ez fair and fine
Ez de skeins of June sunshine,
My little, light-complected Sadie Sue!

## VI

### 2

### CHUCK'S HOODOOS

CHUCK's allus had de Hoodoos bad!—
  Do what he kin to lose 'em,
Dey track dat coon, by sun er moon,
  Des like dey cain't uxcuse 'im!
An' more he gyaurd 'em off, more hard
  Hit 'pear-like dat dey press 'im—
De onliest luck dey 'low ole Chuck
  Is dis enough to 'stress 'im!

He taken care—no matter where
  He's walkin' 'long de street an'
See any ladder leanin' there,
  Er cross-eyed man he's meetin'—
Dat eye o' his ketch wher' dey is,
  An', quick as "scat," Chuck's hittin'
De curb outside, an' watch wile-eyed
  Fust lef'-han' place to spit in!

He' got toenails o' bats; an' snails
  Shet hot in deir shell-houses
Wid sealin'-wax; an' little backs
  O' turkles in his trouse's:
'A moleskin'-pu's'; an' possum's han'—
  Des ever' charm an' wonder—
'An' barber-chair o' shore hosshair—
  An' hoss-shoe hangin' under!

"An' yit," says Chuck, "I got no luck:—
  De Hoodoos still a-bafflin'
Dis po' ole saint what knows he ain't—
  'Twix' shootin' craps an' rafflin'!
No overcoat—ner underwear,—
  Right on de aidge o' winter
I's up aginst de wust layout
  Dey's ever got me inter!"

## OUR LITTLE GIRL

Her heart knew naught of sorrow,
Nor the vaguest taint of sin—
'Twas an ever-blooming blossom
Of the purity within:
And her hands knew only touches
Of the mother's gentle care,
And the kisses and caresses
Through the interludes of prayer.

Her baby-feet had journeyed
Such a little distance here,
They could have found no briars
In the path to interfere;
The little cross she carried
Could not weary her, we know,
For it lay as lightly on her
As a shadow on the snow.

And yet the way before us—
  O how empty now and drear!—
How ev'n the dews of roses
  Seem as dripping tears for her!
And the songbirds all seem crying,
  As the winds cry and the rain,
All sobbingly,—"We want—we want
  Our little girl again!"

## A GOOD MAN

### I

A GOOD MAN never dies—
  In worthy deed and prayer
And helpful hands, and honest eyes,
  If smiles or tears be there:
Who lives for you and me—
  Lives for the world he tries
To help—he lives eternally.
  A good man never dies.

### II

Who lives to bravely take
  His share of toil and stress,
And, for his weaker fellows' sake,
  Makes every burden less,—
He may, at last, seem worn—
  Lie fallen—hands and eyes
Folded—yet, though we mourn and mourn,
  A good man never dies.

## NICHOLAS OBERTING

*'A hero of ancient mold is Nicholas Oberting, of Hardentown, Indiana, who, a few days ago, in saving three boys from being gored to death by his infuriated bull, performed a feat of daring comparable only with the valorous deeds of Roman gladiators. . . . . .*
*—Indianapolis Star, February 25, 1906.*

SING! O Voice of Valor, sing!—
Sing of Nicholas Oberting!
Giant of the strength of ten,
Yet the gentlest of all men.

He it was that loved the air,
And the green fields everywhere—
Loved the meadow slopes and rills,
And the cattle on the hills—
Loved all out-o'-doors, and took
Off his hat, with reverent look,

As the balmy winds of Spring
Waved the peach-bough, blossoming
At the orchard edge, where he
Paused to mark the minstrelsy
Of the daring first redbreast,
Whose lilt, at its loveliest,
Was not lovelier to hear
Than the laughter, ringing near,
Of child-voices—Truants,—three
Little stragglers, he could see,
Crossing the near pasture-land
Loiteringly, hand in hand,
Laughing as they came. . . . Until—
Sudden ran a sickening chill
Through the strong man's heart! . . . He heard
Scarce his own voice, afterward,
For the maddened, bellowing roar
Of the monster beast that bore
Down upon the lads. . . . Out rang
His quick warning.—Then he sprang
Forth to meet them, crying, *"Run!—*
*Straight for me!—Come on!—Well done!"*—
Praised them—cheered them.—*"Good! Hooray!*
*Now, Red-top, you throw away*

*That cap! but don't"*— And breathless hung
The sentence;—for a root had flung
The youngster—stunned—prone on the
ground . . .
Then—midst a trampling, thund'rous sound,
The bellowing beast, with his big bent head,
And great horns, white as his eyes were red!—
Charged for the lad, as he helpless lay . . .
There was a leap then; and—they say—
(For but one boy had swooned away)—
There was the *leap* and the *laugh* of *a Man* . . .
And the bravest war of the world began:
Pinned by the horns in the Hercules grip
Of his master—the slavering jaws adrip,
The foaming, steaming, sweltering, hot-
Mouthed monster raged and charged and
fought,—
But ever the great strong hands were set
At their horny leverage, bloody-wet;
And ever steadier pressed the hold,
And ever the wild eyes wilder rolled
As the thick neck turned, and the great hulk
grew
Like an o'er-fed engine, shuddering through—

Yet the thick neck turned—and turned—and
turned—
Till the raw tongue shot from the throat and
burned
The live air foul; and the beast lurched dead
Crunchingly.
. . . . . And the youngsters said
That the big man just lay there and cried—
He was so sorry and satisfied!

## THE ROSE-LADY

### TO THE ROSES

I DREAM that you are kisses Allah sent
In forms material, that all the earth
May taste of you and guess of Heaven's worth,
Since it can waste such sweetness with content,—
Seeing you showered o'er the Battlement—
By Angel-hands plucked ripe from lips of mirth
And flung in lavish clusters, yet no dearth
Of rapture for the Anthem! . . . I have bent
Above you, nestled in some low retreat,
Pressing your velvet mouths against the dust,
And, ever nurturing this old conceit,
Have lifted up your lips in perfect trust
Against my mouth, nor found them the less sweet
For having kissed the dust beneath my feet.

## OURS

LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY, DECEMBER 8, 1906

*Read at Banquet in Honor of Henry Watterson Upon His Departure for Spain*

HERE where of old was heard
The ringing, singing word
That orator and bard
    Alike set free
To soar, through heights profound,
Our land's remotest bound,
Till all is holy ground
    From sea to sea—

Here still, with voice and pen,
ONE cheers the hopes of men
And gives us faith again—
    This gifted one
We hold here as the guest
Most honored—loved the best—
Wisest and worthiest—
    Our Watterson.

His spirit is the Seer's—
For, though he sees and hears
Through human doubts and fears,
    His heart is one
With Earth's and the Divine—
With his home-hearts—and mine—
And the child's heart is thine,
    Our Watterson!

Give us to touch and praise
His worth in subtlest ways,—
Lest even our fondest gaze
    He fain would shun—
Laugh, though a mist appears—
The glad wine salt with tears—
Laugh, as we drain it—"Here's
    Our Watterson!"

## AMERICA

SEPTEMBER 14, 1901

*O Thou, America—Messiah of Nations!*

I

IN THE NEED that bows us thus,
America!
Shape a mighty song for us—
America!
Song to whelm a hundred years'
Roar of wars and rain of tears
'Neath a world's triumphant cheers:
America! America!

II

Lift the trumpet to thy mouth,
America!
East and West and North and South—
America!
Call us round the dazzling shrine
Of the starry old ensign—
New-baptized in blood of thine,
America! America!

III

Dying eyes through pitying mists,
America!
See the Assassin's shackled wrists,
America!
Patient eyes that turn their sight
From all blackening crime and blight
Still toward Heaven's holy light—
America! America!

IV

High o'erlooking sea and land,
America!
Trustfully with outheld hand,
America!
Thou dost welcome all in quest
Of thy freedom, peace and rest—
Every exile is thy guest,
America! America!

V

Thine a universal love,
America!
Thine the cross and crown thereof,
America!
Aid us, then, to sing thy worth:
God hath builded, from thy birth,
The first nation of the earth—
America! America!

## A HOOSIER CALENDAR

### January

Bleak January! Cold as fate,
  And ever colder—ever keener—
Our very hair cut while we wait
  By winds that clip it ever cleaner:
Cold as a miser's buried gold,
  Or nether-deeps of old tradition—
*Jeems January!* you're a cold
    Proposition!

### February

You, February,—seem to be
  Old January's understudy,
But play the part too vaudeville-y,—
  With wind too moist and snow too muddy—
You overfreeze and overthaw—
  Your "Hos'ler Jo"-like recitation
But hints that you're, at best, a raw
    Imitation.

## March

And, March, you've got no friends to spare—
  Warm friends, I mean—unless coal-dealers,
Or gas-well owners, pipin' where
  The piper's paid—above all spielers;
You are a month, too, of complex
  Perversities beyond solution—
A sorto' "loveliest of your sex"
    Institution!

## April

But, April, when you kindo' come
  A-sa'nterin' down along our roadway,
The bars is down, and we're at home,
  And you're as welcome as a show-day!
First thing we know, the sunshine falls
  Spring-like, and drenches all Creation
With that-ere ba'm the poets calls
    "Inspiration."

## May

And May!—It's warmin' jest to see
  The crick thawed clear ag'in and dancin'—
'Pear-like it's tickled 'most as *me*
  A-prancin' 'crosst it with my pants on!
And then to hear the bluebird whet
  His old song up and lance it through you,
Clean through the boy's heart beatin' yet—
    Hallylooya!

## June

June—'Ll, I jest git *doped* on June!—
  The trees and grass all at their greenest—
The round earth swung 'twixt sun and moon,
  Jest at its—so to say—serenest:—
In country,—stars and whipperwills;
  In town,—all night the boys invadin'
Leadin' citizens' winder-sills,
    Sair-a-nadin'.

## July

Fish still a-bitin'—*some;* but 'most
  Too hot fer anything but layin'
Jest do-less like, and watchin' clo'st
  The treetops and the squirrels playin'—
Their tail-tips switched 'bove knot and limb,
  But keepin' most in sequestration—
Leavin' a big part to the im-
    Magination.

## August

Now when it's August—I can tell
  It by a hunderd signs and over;—
They is a mixed ripe-apple-smell
  And mashed-down grass and musty clover;
Bees is as lazy 'most as me—
  Bee-bird eats 'em—gap's his wings out
So lazy 'at I don't think he
    Spits their stings out!

## September

September, you appeal to all,
  Both young and old, lordly and lowly;
You stuff the hay-mow, trough and stall,
  Till horse and cow's as roly-poly
As pigs is, slopped on buttermilk
  And brand, shipstuff and 'tater-peelin's—
And folks, too, feelin' fine as silk
    With all their feelin's!

## October

If I'd be'n asked for my advice,
  And thought the thing out, ca'm and sober —
Sizin' the months all once or twice,—
  I'd la'nch'd the year out with *October*. . . .
All Nature then jest veiled and dressed
  In weddin' gyarments, ornamented
With ripe-fruit-gems—and kissin' jest
    New-invented!

## November

I'm 'feared November's hopes is few
And far between!—Cold as a Monday-
Washday, er a lodge-man who
You' got to pallbear for on Sunday;
Colder and scolder every day—
The fixed official time for sighin',—
A sinkin' state you jest can't stay
In, or *die* in!

## December

December—why, of course we grin
And bear it—shiverin' every minute,
Yet warm from time the month rolls in
Till it skites out with Christmas in it;
And so, for all its coldest truths
And chill, goose-pimpled imperfections,
It wads our lank old socks with Youth's
Recollections.

## AN AUTUMNAL TONIC

WHAT mystery is it? The morning as rare
As the Indian Summer may bring!
A tang in the frost and a spice in the air
That no city poet can sing!
The crimson and amber and gold of the leaves,
As they loosen and flutter and fall
In the path of the park, as it rustlingly weaves
Its way through the maples and under the eaves
Of the sparrows that chatter and call.

What hint of delight is it tingles me through?—
What vague, indefinable joy?
What yearning for something divine that I knew
When a wayward and wood-roving boy?
Ah-ha! and O-ho! but I have it, I say—
Oh, the mystery brightens at last,—
'Tis the longing and zest of the far, far away,
For a bountiful, old-fashioned dinner to-day,
With the hale harvest-hands of the past.

## A HUMBLE SINGER

A MODEST singer, with meek soul and heart,
Sat, yearning that his art
Might but inspire and suffer him to sing
Even the simplest thing.

And as he sang thus humbly, came a Voice:—
"All mankind shall rejoice,
Hearing thy pure and simple melody
Sing on immortally."

## THE LITTLE WOMAN

My little woman, of you I sing
With a fervor all divine,—
For I know the clasp of the hands that cling
So closely here in mine.

Though the rosy palms I used to press
Are faded and worn with care,
And tremulous is the old caress
That nestles in my hair,—

Your heart to me is a changeless page;
I have read it bit by bit,
From the dawn of love to the dusk of age,—
And the tale is Holy Writ.

Fold your eyes,—for the twilight bends
As a mother o'er her child—
Even as when, in the long-lost Then,
You bent o'er ours and smiled. . . .

(Nay, but I spoke all unaware!
  See! I am kneeling, too,
And with mine, dear, is the rose's prayer,
  With a blur of tears and dew.)

But O little woman, I often grieve,
  As I think of the vanished years
And trace the course of the cares that leave
  Your features dim with tears:

I often grieve, for the frowns I wore
  When the world seemed all untrue,—
When my hard, proud heart was sick and sore
  And would not come to you!

I often grieve, as I hold your hand—
  As I hold your hand to-night,—
That it takes so long to understand
  The lesson of love aright!

But sing the song that I taught you once,
  Dear little woman, as *then*—
Away far back in the golden months;—
  Sing me the song again!

For, as under the stars we loved of yore
When the nights of love were long,
Your poor, pale lips grow glad once more
And I kiss them into song:—

*My little woman's hands are fair*
*As even the moonflowers be*
*When fairies creep in their depths and sleep*
*Till the sun leaps out o' the sea.*

*And O her eyes, they are spheres of light—*
*So brighter than stars are they,*
*The brightest day is the darkest night*
*When my little woman's away.*

*For my little woman has ever a tear*
*And a sigh when I am sad;*
*And I have a thousand smiles for her*
*When my little woman is glad.*

*But my little woman is strong and brave,*
*For all of her tears and sighs,*
*Her stanch little heart knows how to behave*
*Whenever the storms arise.*

My little woman, of you I sing
With a fervor all divine,—
For I know the clasp of the hands that cling
So closely here in mine.

## A SPRING SONG AND A LATER

She sang a song of May for me,
  Wherein once more I heard
The mirth of my glad infancy—
  The orchard's earliest bird—
The joyous breeze among the trees
  New-clad in leaf and bloom,
And there the happy honey-bees
  In dewy gleam and gloom.

So purely, sweetly on the sense
  Of heart and spirit fell
Her song of Spring, its influence—
  Still irresistible,—
Commands me here—with eyes ablur—
  To mate her bright refrain,
Though I but shed a rhyme for her
  As dim as Autumn rain.

## THE CHILDREN OF THE CHILDLESS

The Children of the Childless!—Yours—and
mine.—
Yea, though we sit here in the pitying gaze
Of fathers and mothers whose fond fingers twine
Their children's locks of living gold, and praise
With warm, caressing palms, the head of brown,
Or crown
Of opulent auburn, with its amber floss
In all its splendor loosed and jostled down
Across
The mother-lap at prayer.—Yea, even when
These sweet petitioners are kissed, and then
Are kissed and kissed again—
The pursed mouths lifted with the worldlier
prayer
That bed and oblivion spare
Them yet a little while
Beside their envied elders by the glow
Of the glad firelight; or wresting, as they go,

Some promise for the morrow, to beguile
Their long exile
Within the wild waste lands of dream and sleep.
Nay, nay, not even these most stably real
Of children are more loved than our ideal—
More tangible to the soul's touch and sight
Than *these—our* children by Divine birth-
right. . . .
These—these of ours, who soothe us, when we
weep,
With tenderest ministries,
Or, flashing into smiling ecstasies,
Come dashing through our tears—aye, laughing
leap
Into our empty arms, in Fate's despite,
And nestle to our hearts. O Heaven's delight!—
The children of the childless—even *these!*

## LINCOLN—THE BOY

O SIMPLE as the rhymes that tell
The simplest tales of youth,
Or simple as a miracle
Beside the simplest truth—
So simple seems the view we share
With our Immortals, sheer
From Glory looking down to where
They were as children here.

Or thus we know, nor doubt it not,
The boy he must have been
Whose budding heart bloomed with
the thought
All men are kith and kin—
With love-light in his eyes and shade
Of prescient tears:—Because
Only of such a boy were made
The loving man he was.

## WHAT TITLE?

WHAT TITLE best befits the man
We hold our first American?
Or Statesman; Soldier; Hero; Chief,
Whose Country is his first belief;
Or sanest, safest Leader; or
True Patriot; or Orator,
Heard still at Inspiration's height,
Because he speaks for truth and right:
Or shall his people be content
With Our Republic's President,
Or trust his ringing worth to live
In song as Chief Executive?
Nay—his the simplest name—though set
Upon him like a coronet,—
God names our first American
The highest, noblest name—The MAN.

## GENERAL LEW WALLACE

### February 15, 1905

Nay, Death, thou mightiest of all
  Dread conquerors—thou dreadest chief,—
Thy heavy hand can here but fall
  Light as the Autumn leaf:
As vainly, too, its weight is laid
  Upon the warrior's knightly sword;—
Still through the charge and cannonade
  It flashes for the Lord.

In forum—as in battlefield—
  His voice rang for the truth—the right—
Keyed with the shibboleth that pealed
  His Soul forth to the fight:
The inspiration of his pen
  Glowed as a star, and lit anew
The faces and the hearts of men
  Watching, the long night through.

A destiny ordained—divine
It seemed to hosts of those who saw
His rise since youth and marked the line
Of his ascent with awe:—
From the now-storied little town
That gave him birth and worth, behold,
Unto this day of his renown,
His sword and word of gold.

Serving the Land he loved so well—
Hailed midsea or in foreign port,
Or in strange-bannered citadel
Or Oriental Court,—
He—honored for his Nation's sake,
And loved and honored for his own—
Hath seen his Flag in glory shake
Above the Pagan Throne.

## THE HOOSIER IN EXILE

The Hoosier in Exile—a toast
That by its very sound
Moves us, at first, to tears almost,
And sympathy profound;
But musing for a little space,
We lift the glass and smile,
And poise it with a royal grace—
The Hoosier in Exile!

The Hoosier in Exile, forsooth!
For though his steps may roam
The earth's remotest bounds, in truth
His heart is ever home!
O loyal still to every tie
Of native fields and streams,
His boyhood friends, and paths whereby
He finds them in his dreams!

Though he may fare the thronging maze
Of alien city streets,
His thoughts are set in grassy ways
And woodlands' cool retreats;

Forever, clear and sweet above
The traffic's roar and din,
In breezy groves he hears the dove,
And is at peace within.

When newer friends and generous hands
Advance him; he returns
Due gratefulness, yet, pausing, stands
As one who strangely yearns
To pay still further thanks, but sighs
To think he knows not where,
Till—like as life—with misty eyes
He sees his mother there.

The Hoosier in Exile? Ah, well,
Accept the phrase, but know
The Hoosier heart must ever dwell
Where orchard blossoms grow
The whitest, apples reddest, and,
In cornlands, mile on mile,
The old homesteads forever stand—
"The Hoosier in Exile!"

## CHRISTINE

*"Two strangers meeting at a festival;*
*Two lovers whispering by an orchard wall."*
*—Tennyson.*

Most quaintly touching, in her German tongue—
Haply, had he but mastered that as well
As she his English, this were not to tell:—
Touring through her dear Fatherland, the young
American first found her, as she sung
*"Du bist mir nah und doch so fern,"* while fell
Their eyes together, and the miracle
Of love and doom was wrought. Her father wrung
The lovers from each other's arms forever—
Forgive him, all forgiving souls that can!
She died that selfsame hour—just paused to write
Her broken heart's confession thus: "I never
Was oh so loving in a young gentleman
Than yet I am to you. So ist' Good night."

## YOU MAY NOT REMEMBER

*In the deep grave's charméd chamber,*
*Lying tranced in breathless slumber,*
*You may haply not remember.*

You may not remember whether
It was Spring or Summer weather;
But *I* know—we two together
At the dim end of the day—
How the fireflies in the twilight
Drifted by like flakes of starlight,
Till o'er floods of flashing moonlight
They were wave-like swept away.

You may not remember any
Word of mine of all the many
Poured out for you there, though then a
Soul inspiréd spake my love;—
But *I* knew—and still review it,
All my passion, as with awe it
Welled in speech as from a poet
Gifted of the gods above.

## YOU MAY NOT REMEMBER

Sleeping here, this hour I grieve in,
You may not remember even
Any kiss I still believe in,
Or caress of ecstasy,—
May not even *dream*—O can't you?—
That I kneel here—weep here—want you—
Feign me in your grave, to haunt you,
Since you come not back to me!

Vain! ah, vain is all my yearning
As the West's last embers burning
Into ashes, slowly turning
Ever to a denser gray!—
While the fireflies in the twilight
Drift about like flakes of starlight,
Till o'er wastes of wannest moonlight
They are wave-like swept away.

## THE REST

V. K.—NATURALIST

He rests at last, as on the mother-breast
The playworn child at evening lies at rest,—
For he, a buoyant child, in veriest truth,
Has looked on life with eyes of changeless youth:—
Has loved our green old earth here from the hour
Of his first memory of bud and flower—
Of morning's grassy lawns and dewy trees
And orchard-blossoms, singing birds and bees:

When all the world about him was a land
Elysian, with the mother near at hand:
With steadfast gaze of wonder and delight
He marked the miracles of day and night:—
Beheld the kingly sun, in dazzling reign
By day; and, with her glittering, glimmering train
Of stars, he saw the queenly moon possess
Her throne in midmost midnight's mightiness.

All living least of things he ever knew
Of mother Earth's he was a brother to:
The lone rose by the brook—or, under, where
The swaying water-lilies anchored there;
His love dipped even to the glossy things
That walked the waters and forgot their wings
In sheer insanity of some delight
Known but to that ecstatic parasite.

It was enough, thus childishly to sense
All works—since worthy of Omnipotence—
As worshipful: Therefor, as any child,
He knelt in tenderness of tears, or smiled
His gratefulness, as to a playmate glad
To share His pleasures with a poorer lad.
And so he lived: And so he *died?*—Ah, no,
We'll not believe that till he tells us so.

## A CHRISTMAS GLEE

FEIGNED AS FROM ELIZABETHAN COMEDY

### I

With a hey! and a hi! and a hey-ho glee!
O a Christmas glass for a sweet-lipped lass
To kiss and pass, in her coquetry—
So rare!
And the lads all flush save the right one there—
So rare—so rare!
With a hey! and a hi! and a ho—oh!
The Christmas holly and the mistletoe!

### II

With a hey! and a hi! and a hey-ho wile!
As he lifts the cup and his wan face up,
Her eyes touch his with a tender smile—
So rare!
Then his hands grasp out—and her own are there—

So rare—so rare!
With a hey! and a hi! and a ho—oh!
The Christmas holly and the mistletoe!

CHORUS

With a hey! and a hi! and a hey-ho-ho!
The wind, the winter and the drifting snow!
With a hey! and a hi! and a ho—oh!
The Christmas holly and the mistletoe!

## WE MUST BELIEVE

*"Lord, I believe: help Thou mine unbelief."*

I

We must believe—
Being from birth endowed with love and trust—
Born unto loving;—and how simply just
That love—that faith!—even in the blossom-face
The babe drops dreamward in its resting-place,
Intuitively conscious of the sure
Awakening to rapture ever pure
And sweet and saintly as the mother's own,
Or the awed father's, as his arms are thrown
O'er wife and child, to round about them weave
And wind and bind them as one harvest-sheaf
Of love—to cleave to, and *forever* cleave. . . .
Lord, I believe:
Help Thou mine unbelief.

## II

We must believe—
Impelled since infancy to seek some clear
Fulfilment, still withheld all seekers here;—
For never have we seen perfection nor
The glory we are ever seeking for:
But we *have* seen—all mortal souls as one—
Have seen its *promise,* in the morning sun—
Its blest assurance, in the stars of night;—
The ever-dawning of the dark to light;—
The tears down-falling from all eyes that grieve—
The eyes uplifting from all deeps of grief,
Yearning for what at last we shall receive. . . .
Lord, I believe:
Help Thou mine unbelief.

## III

We must believe:
For still all unappeased our hunger goes,
From life's first waking, to its last repose:
The briefest life of any babe, or man
Outwearing even the allotted span,

Is each a life unfinished—incomplete:
For these, then, of th' outworn, or unworn feet
Denied one toddling step— O there must be
Some fair, green, flowery pathway endlessly
Winding through lands Elysian! Lord, receive
And lead each as Thine Own Child—even the Chief
Of us who didst Immortal life achieve. . . .
Lord, I believe:
Help Thou mine unbelief.

## LIFE AT THE LAKE

The green below and the blue above!—
The waves caressing the shores they love:
Sails in haven, and sails afar
And faint as the waterlilies are
In inlets haunted of willow wands,
Listless lovers, and trailing hands
With spray to gem them and tan to glove.—
The green below and the blue above.

The blue above and the green below!
Would that the world were always so!—
Always summer and warmth and light,
With mirth and melody day and night!
Birds in the boughs of the beckoning trees,
Chirr of locusts and whiff of breeze—
World-old roses that bud and blow.—
The blue above and the green below.

The green below and the blue above!
Heigh! young hearts and the hopes thereof!—
Kate in the hammock, and Tom sprawled on
The sward—like a lover's picture, drawn
By the lucky dog himself, with Kate
To moon o'er his shoulder and meditate
On a fat old purse or a lank young love.—
The green below and the blue above.

The blue above and the green below!
Shadow and sunshine to and fro.—
Season for dreams—whate'er befall
Hero, heroine, hearts and all!
Wave or wildwood—the blithe bird sings,
And the leaf-hid locust whets his wings—
Just as a thousand years ago—
The blue above and the green below.

## WE MUST GET HOME

We must get home! How could we stray like
this?—
So far from home, we know not where it is,—
Only in some fair, apple-blossomy place
Of children's faces—and the mother's face—
We dimly dream it, till the vision clears
Even in the eyes of fancy, glad with tears.

We must get home! With heart and soul we
yearn
To find the long-lost pathway, and return! . . .
The child's shout lifted from the questing band
Of old folk, faring weary, hand in hand,
But faces brightening, as if clouds at last
Were showering sunshine on us as they passed.

We must get home—home to the simple things,—
The morning-glories twirling up the strings
And bugling color, as they blared in blue-
And-white o'er garden-gates we scampered
through;
The long grape-arbor, with its under-shade
Blue as the green-and-purple overlaid.

The rows of sweetcorn and the China beans
Beyond the lettuce-beds where, towering, leans
The giant sunflower in barbaric pride
Guarding the barn-door and the lane outside;
The honeysuckles, midst the hollyhocks,
That clamber almost to the martin-box.

We must get home! There only may we find
The little playmates that we left behind,—
Some racing down the road; some by the brook;
Some droning at their desks, with wistful look
Across the fields and orchards—further still
Where laughs and weeps the old wheel at the
mill.

We must get home! The willow-whistle's call
Trills crisp and liquid as the waterfall—
Mocking the trillers in the cherry-trees
And making discord of such rhymes as these,
That know nor lilt nor cadence but the birds
First warbled—then all poets afterwards.

We must get home again—we must—we must!—
(Our rainy faces pelted to the dust)

Creep back from the vain quest through endless
strife
To find not anywhere in all of life
A happier happiness than blest us then. . . .
We must get home—we must get Home again!

# DIALECT, CHILDISH, AND LIGHTER LINES

## THE HIRED MAN'S DOG-STORY

*"Twa dogs that were na thrang at hame*
*Forgather'd ance upon a time."*

—*Burns.*

Dogs, I contend, is jes' about
Nigh human—git 'em studied out.
I hold, like us, they've got their own
Reasonin' powers 'at's theirs alone—
Same as their tricks and habits too,
Provin', by lots o' things they do,
That instinct's not the only thing
That dogs is governed by, i jing!—
And I'll say furder, on that line,
And prove it, that they's dogs a-plenty
Will show intelligence as fine
As ary ten men out o' twenty!

Jevver investigate the way
Sheep-killin' dogs goes at it—hey?
Well, you dig up the facts and you
Will find, first thing, they's always *two*
Dogs goes together on that spree

O' blood and puore dog-deviltry!
And, then, they always go at night—
Mind ye, it's never in daylight,
When folks is up and wide awake,—
No self-respectin' dogs 'll make
Mistakes o' judgment on that score,—
And I've knowed fifty head or more
O' slaughtered sheep found in the lot,
Next morning the old farmer got
His folks up and went out to feed,—
And every livin' soul agreed
That all night long they never heerd
The bark o' dog ner bleat o' skeerd
And racin', tromplin' flock o' sheep
A-skallyhootin' roun' the pastur',
To rouse 'em from their peaceful sleep
To that heart-renderin' disaster!

Well, now, they's actchul evidence
In all these facts set forth; and hence
When, by like facts, it has been foun'
That these two dogs—colloguin' roun'
*At night* as thick as thieves—*by day*
Don't go together anyway,

And, 'pearantly, hain't never met
Each other; and the facts is set
On record furder, that these smart
Old pards in crime lives miles apart—
Which is a trick o' theirs, to throw
Off all suspicion, don't you know!—
One's a *town*-dog—belongin' to
Some good man, maybe—or to you!—
And one's a *country*-dog, or *"jay,"*
As you nickname us thataway.
Well, now!—these is the facts I' got
(And, mind ye, these *is* facts—not *guesses*)
To argy on, concernin' what
Fine reasonin' powers dogs p'sesses.

My idy is,—the dog lives in
The *town,* we'll say, runs up ag'in
The *country*-dog, some Saturday,
Under a' old farm-wagon, say,
Down at the Courthouse hitchin'-rack.—
Both lifts the bristles on their back
And show their teeth and growl as though
They meant it pleasant-like and low,
In case the fight hangs fire. And they

Both wag then in a friendly way,
The town-dog sayin':— "Seems to me,
Last Dimocratic jubilee,
I seen you here in town somewhere?"
The country-dog says:— "Right you air!—
And right here's where you seen me, too,
Under this wagon, watchin' *you!*"
"Yes," says the town-dog,—"and I thought
We'd *both* bear watchin', like as not."
And as he yawns and looks away,
The country-dog says, "What's your lay?"
The town-dog whets his feet a spell
And yawns ag'in, and then says,—"Well,
Before I answer that—Ain't you
A Mill Crick dog, a mile or two
From old Chape Clayton's stock-farm—say?"
"Who *told* you?" says the jay-dog—"hey?"
And looks up, real su'prised. "*I guessed,*"
The town-dog says— "*You* tell the rest,—
How's old Chape's mutton, anyhow?—
How many of 'em's ready now—
How many's ripe enough for use,
And how's the hot, red, rosy juice?"
"'Mm!" says the country-dog, "I think

I sorto' see a little blink
O' what you mean." And then he stops
And turns and looks up street and lops
His old wet tongue out, and says he,
Lickin' his lips, all slobbery,
"Ad-drat my melts! you're jes' my man!—
I'll trust you, 'cause I know I can!"
And then he says, "I'll tell you jes'
How things is, and Chape's carelessness
About his sheep,—fer instance, say,
To-morry Chapes 'll all be 'way
To Sund'y-meetin'—and ag'in
At night." "At night? That lets us in!—
'Better the day' "—the town-dog says—
"'Better the deed.' We'll pray; Lord, yes!—
May the outpourin' grace be shed
Abroad, and all hearts comforted
Accordin' to their lights!" says he,
"And that, of course, means you and me."
And then they both snarled, low and quiet—
Swore where they'd meet. And both stood by it!

Jes' half-past eight on Sund'y night,
Them two dogs meets,—the *town*-dog, light

O' foot, though five mile' he had spanned
O' field, beech-wood and bottom-land.
But, as books says,—we draw a veil
Over this chapter of the tale! . . .
Yit when them two infernal, mean,
Low, orn'ry whelps has left the scene
O' carnage—chased and putt to death
The last pore sheep,—they've yit got breath
Enough to laugh and joke about
The fun they've had, while they sneak out
The woods-way for the old crick where
They both plunge in and wash their hair
And rench their bloody mouths, and grin,
As each one skulks off home ag'in—
Jes' innardly too proud and glad
To keep theirselves from kindo' struttin',
Thinkin' about the fun they'd had—
When their blame wizzens needed cuttin'!

Dogs is deliber't.—They can bide
Their time till s'picions all has died.
The country-dog don't 'pear to care
Fer town no more,—he's off somewhere
When the folks whistles, as they head

The team t'ords town. As I jes' said,—
Dogs is deliber't, don't forgit!
So this-here dog he's got the grit
To jes' deprive hisse'f o' town
For 'bout three weeks. But time rolls roun'! . . . . .
Same as they *first* met:—Saturday—
Same Courthouse—hitchrack—and same way
The team wuz hitched—same wagon where
The same *jay*-dog growls under there
When same *town*-dog comes loafin' by,
With the most innocentest eye
And ginerl meek and lowly style,
As though he'd never cracked a smile
In all his mortal days!—And both
Them dogs is strangers, you'd take oath!—
Both keeps a-lookin' sharp, to see
If folks is watchin'—jes' the way
They acted that first Saturday
They talked so confidentchully.
"Well"—says the town-dog, in a low
And careless tone—"Well, whatch you know?"
"*'Know'?*" says the country-dog—"Lots more
Than some smart people knows—that's shore!"
And then, in his dog-language, he

Explains how slick he had to be
When some suspicious folks come roun'
A-tryin' to track and run him down—
Like *he'd* had anything to do
With killin' over fifty head
O' sheep! "Jes' think!—and *me*"—he said,
"And me as innocent as *you,*
That very hour, five mile' away
In this town, like you air to-day!"
"Ah!" says the town-dog, "there's the beauty
O' bein' *prepared* for what may be,
And *washin'* when you've done your duty!—
No stain o' blood on you or me
Nor wool in *our* teeth!—*Then,*" says he,
"When wicked men has wronged us so,
We ort to learn to be forgivin'—
Half the world, of course, don't know
How the other gits its livin'!"

## PERVERSITY

You have more'n likely noticed,
  When you *didn't* when you *could,*
That jes the thing you *didn't* do
  Was jes the thing you *should.*

## HER POET-BROTHER

Oh! what ef little childerns all
  Wuz big as parunts is!
Nen I'd join pa's Masonic Hall
  An' wear gold things like his!
An' you'd "receive," like ma, an' be
  My "hostuss"—An', gee-whizz!
We'd *alluz* have ice cream, ef we
  Wuz big as parunts is!

Wiv all the money mens is got—
  We'd buy a *Store* wiv that,—
Ist candy, pies an' cakes, an' not
  No *drygoods*—'cept a hat-
An'-plume fer *you*—an' "plug" fer me,
  An' clothes like *ma's* an' *his,*
'At on'y ist fit *us*—ef we
  Wuz big as parunts is!

'An'—ef *we* had a little boy
An' girl like me an' you,—
Our Store'd keep ever' kind o' toy
They'd ever want us to!—
We'd hire "Old Kriss" to 'tend to be
The boss of all the biz
An' ist "*charge*" ever'thing—ef we
Wuz big as parunts is!

## I' GOT TO FACE MOTHER TO-DAY!

I' got to face Mother to-day, fer a fact!—
I' got to face Mother to-day!
And just how I'll *dare* to, an' how she will act,
Is more than a mortal can say!
But I' got to face her— I' got to! And so
Here's a' old father clean at the end of his row!

And Pink and Wade's gone to the farm fer her now—
And I'm keepin' house fer 'em here—
Their purty, new house—and all paid fer!— But how
Am *I* goin' to meet her, and clear
Up *my* actchully he'ppin' 'em both to elope?—
('Cause Mother wuz set—and wuz no other hope!)

I don't think it's *Wade* she's so biased ag'in,
But his *bizness,*—a railroadin' man
'At runs a switch-engine, day out and day in,
And's got to make hay while he can,—
It's a *dangersome* job, I'll admit,—but see what
A fine-furnished home 'at he's already got!

And *Pink*—W'y, the girl wuz just pinin' away,—
So what could her old father do,
When he found her, hid-like, in a loose load of hay,
But jist to drive on clean into
The aidge of the city, where—singular thing!—
Wade switched us away to the Squire, i jing!

Now—a-leavin' me here—they're driv off, with a cheer,
On their weddin'-trip—which is to drive
Straight home and tell Mother, and toll her back here
And surrender me, dead er alive!
So I'm waitin' here—not so blame' overly gay
As I *wuz,*—'cause I' got to face *Mother* to-day!

## GRAMPA'S CHOICE

First and best of earthly joys,
I like little girls and boys:
Which of all do I like best?
Why, the one that's happiest.

## A LITTLE LAME BOY'S VIEWS

On 'Scursion-days—an' Shows—an' Fairs—
They ain't no bad folks anywheres!—
On streetcars—same as *you*—
Seems like *some*body allus sees
I'm lame, an' takes me on their knees,
An' holds my crutches, too—
An' asts me what's my name, an' pays
My fare theirse'f—On all Big Days!

The mob all *scrowdges* you an' makes
Enough o' bluffs, fer goodness-sakes!
But none of 'em *ain't* mad—
They're only *lettin' on.—I* know;—
An' I can tell you *why* it's so:
They're all of 'em too *glad*—
They're *ever'one,* jes glad as *me*
To be there, er they *wouldn't* be!

The man that sells the tickets snoops
My "one-er" in, but sorto' stoops
An' grins out at me—then
Looks mean an' business-like an' sucks
His big mustache at me an' chucks
Too much change out again.—
He's a *smooth citizen,* an' yit
He don't fool *me* one little bit!

An' then, *inside*—fer all the jam—
Folks, seems-like, all knows who I am,
An' tips me nods an' winks;
An' even country-folks has made
Me he'p eat pie an' marmalade,
With bottled milk fer "drinks"!—
Folks *all's* so good to me that I—
Sometimes—I nearly purt'-near' *cry.*

An' all the *kids,* high-toned er pore,
Seems better than they wuz before,
An' wants to kindo' "stand
In" with a feller—see him through

The *free* lay-out an' *sideshows,* too,
An' do the bloomin' "grand"!
On 'Scursion-days—an' Shows an' Fairs—
They ain't no bad folks anywheres!

## RABBIT

I S'POSE it takes a feller 'at's ben
Raised in a country-town, like me,
To '*preciate* rabbits! . . . Eight er ten
Bellerin' boys and two er three
Yelpin' dawgs all on the trail
O' one little pop-eyed cottontail!

'Bout the first good fall o' snow—
So's you kin track 'em, don't you know,
Where they've run,—and one by one
Hop 'em up and chase 'em down
And prod 'em out of a' old bresh-pile
Er a holler log they're a-hidin' roun',
Er' way en-nunder the ricked cord-wood
Er crosstie-stack by the railroad track
'Bout a mile
Out o' sight o' the whole ding town! . . .
Well! them's times 'at I call good!

Rabbits!—w'y, as my thoughts goes back
To them old boyhood days o' mine,
I kin sic him now and see "Old Jack"
A-plowin' snow in a rabbit-track
And a-pitchin' over him, head and heels,
Like a blame' hat-rack,
As the rabbit turns fer the timber-line
Down the County Ditch through the old corn-
fields. . . .

Yes, and I'll say right here to you,
Rabbits that boys has *earnt,* like that—
Skinned and hung fer a night er two
On the old back-porch where the pump's done
froze—
Then fried 'bout right, where your brekfust's at,
With hot brown gravy and shortenin' bread,—
Rabbits, like *them*—er I ort to a' said,
I s'pose,
Rabbits like *those*
Ain't so p'ticalar pore, I guess,
Fer *eatin'* purposes!

## A VERY TALL BOY

THE ONE LONE LIMERICK OF UNCLE SIDNEY'S

Some credulous chroniclers tell us
Of a very tall youngster named Ellis,
  Whose Pa said, "Ma-ri-er,
  If Bubb grows much higher,
He'll have to be trained up a trellis."

## THINKIN' BACK

I've ben thinkin' back, of late,
S'prisin'!—And I'm here to state
I'm suspicious it's a sign
Of age, maybe, er decline
Of my faculties,—and yit
I'm not feelin' old a bit—
Any more than sixty-four
Ain't no young man any more!

Thinkin' back 's a thing 'at grows
On a feller, I suppose—
Older 'at he gits, i jack,
More he keeps a-thinkin' back!
Old as old men git to be,
Er as middle-aged as me,

Folks 'll find us, eye and mind
Fixed on what we've left behind—
Rehabilitatin'-like
Them old times we used to hike
Out barefooted fer the crick,
'Long 'bout Aprile first—to pick
Out some "warmest" place to go
In a-swimmin'—*Ooh! my-oh!*
Wonder now we hadn't died!
Grate horseradish on my hide
Jes' *a-thinkin'* how cold then
That-'ere worter must 'a' ben!

Thinkin' back—W'y, goodness me!
I kin call their names and see
Every little tad I played
With, er fought, er was afraid
Of, and so made *him* the best
Friend I had of all the rest!
Thinkin' back, I even hear
Them a-callin', high and clear,
Up the crick-banks, where they seem
Still hid in there—like a dream—
And me still a-pantin' on

The green pathway they have gone!
Still they hide, by bend er ford—
Still they hide—but, thank the Lord,
(Thinkin' back, as I have said),
I hear laughin' on ahead!

## NAME US NO NAMES NO MORE

Sing, oh, rarest of roundelays!—
Sing the hilarity and delight
Of our childhood's gurgling, giggling days!
When our eyes were as twinkling-keen and bright
And our laughs as thick as the stars at night,
And our breasts volcanoes of pent hoo-rays!
When we grouped together in secret mirth
And sniggered at everything on earth—
But specially when strange visitors came
And we learned, for instance, that their name
was Fishback—or Mothershead—or Philpott—
or Dalrymple—or Fullenwider—or Applewhite—
or Hunnicutt—or Tubbs—or Oldshoe!
*"'Oldshoe!'—jeminy-jee!" thinks we—*
*"Hain't that a funny name!—tee-hee-hee!"*

Barefoot racers from everywhere,
We'd pelt in over the back-porch floor
For "the settin'-room," and cluster there
Like a clot of bees round an apple-core,

And sleeve our noses, and pinafore
Our smearcase-mouths, and slick our hair,
And stare and listen, and try to look
Like "Agnes" does in the old school-book,—
Till at last we'd catch the visitor's name,—
Reddinhouse, Lippscomb, or Burlingame,—
or Winkler—or Smock—or Tutewiler—or
Daubenspeck—or Throckmorton—or Rubottom
—or Bixler—
*"'Bixler!' jeminy-jee!" thinks we—*
*"Hain't that a funny name!—tee-hee-hee!"*

. . . . . .

Peace!—Let be!—Fall away!—Fetch loose!—
We can't have fun as we had fun *then!*—
Shut up, Memory!—what's the use?—
When the girls and boys of 8 and 10
Are now—well, *matronly,* or *old men,*
And Time has (so to say) "cooked our goose!"
But ah! if we only *could* have back
The long-lost laughs that we now so lack
And so vainly long for,—how—we—*could*
Naturely wake up the neigh-ber-*hood,*

over the still heterogenious names ever unrolling from the endless roster of orthographic actualities,—such names—for further instance of good faith—simply such names as Vanderlip—or Funkhouser—or Smoot—or Galbreath—or Frybarger—or Dinwiddie—or Bouslog—or Puterbaugh—or Longnecker—or Hartpence—or Wiggins—or Pangborn—or Bowersox—

*"Bowersox"! Gee!—But alas! now we*
*Taste salt tears in our "tee-hee-hee!"*

## THE RAGGEDY MAN ON CHILDREN

CHILDERN—take 'em as they run—
You kin *bet* on, ev'ry one!—
Treat 'em right and reco'nize
Human souls is all one size.

Jevver think?—the world's best men
Wears the same souls they had when
They run barefoot—'way back where
All these little childern air.

Heerd a boy, not long ago,
Say his parents *sassed* him so,
He'd *correct* 'em, ef he could,—
Then be good ef *they'd* be good.

## LIZABUTH-ANN ON BAKIN'-DAY

Our Hired Girl, when it's bakin'-day
She's out o' patience allus,
An' tells us "Hike *outdoors* an' play,
An' when the cookies 's done," she'll say,
"Land sake! she'll come an' call us!"
An' when the little doughbowl 's all
Ist heapin'-full, she'll come an' call—
*Nen say,* "She ruther take a switchin'
Than have a pack o' pesky childern
Trackin' round the kitchen!"

## "MOTHER"

I'm gittin' old—I know,—
It seems so long ago—
  So long sence John was here!
He went so young!—our Jim
'S as old now 'most as him,—
  Close on to thirty year'!

I know I'm gittin' old—
I know it by the *cold,*
  From time 'at first frost flies.—
Seems like—sence John was here—
Winters is more severe;
  And winter I de-spise!

And yet it seems, some days,
John's here, with his odd ways . . .
  Comes soon-like from the corn-
Field, callin' "Mother" at
Me—like he called me that
  Even 'fore Jim was born!

When Jim come—La! how good
Was all the neighborhood!—
  And Doctor!—when I heerd
Him joke John, kind o' low,
And say: Yes, folks could go—
  Pa needn't be afeard!

When Jim come,—John says-'e—
A-bendin' over me
  And baby in the bed—
And jes us three,—says-'e
"Our little family!"
    And that was all he said . . .

And cried jes like a child!—
Kissed me again, and smiled,—
  'Cause I was cryin' too.
And here I am *again*
A-cryin', same as then—
  Yet happy through and through!

The old home's most in mind
And joys long left behind . . .
  Jim's little h'istin' crawl

Acrost the floor to where
John set a-rockin' there . . .
(I'm *gittin' old*—That's all!)

I'm gittin' old—no doubt—
(*Healthy* as all git-out!)—
But,—strangest thing I do,—
I cry so *easy* now—
I cry jes anyhow
The fool-tears wants me to!

But Jim *he* won't be told
*'At* "Mother" 's gittin' old! . . .
Hugged me, he did, and smiled
This morning, and bragged *"shore"*
He loved me even more
Than when he was a child!

That's *his* way; but ef *John*
Was here now, lookin' on,
He'd shorely know and see:
"But, 'Mother'," s'pect he'd say,
"S'pose you *air* gittin' gray,
You're younger yet than *me!*"

I'm gittin' old,—because
Our young days, like they was,
  Keeps comin' back—so clear,
'At little Jim, once more,
Comes h'istin' 'crost the floor
  Fer John's old rockin'-cheer!

. . . . . .

O *beautiful!*—to be
A-gittin' old, like me! . . .
  *Hey, Jim! Come in now, Jim!*
*Your supper's ready, dear!*
(How more, every year,
  He looks and acts like *him!*)

## WHAT LITTLE SAUL GOT, CHRISTMAS

Us PARENTS mostly thinks our own's
The smartest childern out!
But Widder Shelton's little Saul
Beats all I know about!
He's weakly-like—in p'int o' health,
But strong in word and deed
And heart and head, and snap and spunk,
And allus in the lead!

Comes honest by it, fer his Pa—
Afore he passed away—
He was a leader—(Lord, I'd like
To hear him preach to-day!)
He led his flock; he led in prayer
Fer spread o' Peace—and when
Nothin' but War could spread it, he
Was first to lead us then!

So little Saul has grit to take
Things jes' as they occur;
And Sister Shelton's proud o' him
As he is proud o' her!

And when she "got up"—jes' fer him
And little playmates all—
A Chris'mus-tree—they ever'one
Was there but little Saul.

Pore little chap was sick in bed
Next room; and Doc was there,
And said the childern might file past,
But go right back to where
The *tree* was, in the settin'-room.
And Saul jes' laid and smiled—
Ner couldn't nod, ner wave his hand,
It hurt so—Bless the child!

And so they left him there with Doc—
And warm tear of his Ma's . . .
Then—suddent-like—high over all
Their laughture and applause—
They heerd: "I don't care what you git
On your old Chris'mus-tree,
'Cause I'm got somepin' you all hain't—
I'm got the pleurisy!"

## GOLDIE GOODWIN

My old Uncle Sidney *he* says it's a sign
All over the Worl', an' ten times out of nine,
He can tell by the *name* of a child ef the same
Is a good er bad youngun—ist knows by their name!—
So he says, "It's the vurry best sign in the Worl'
That *Goldie Goodwin* is a good little girl,"—
An' says, "First she's *gold*—then she's *good*—an' behold,
*Good's* 'bout 'leventy-*hunnerd* times *better* than *gold!*"

## SYMPTOMS

I'M NOT a-workin' now!—
I'm jes' a-layin' round
A-lettin' *other* people plow.—
*I'm* cumberin' the ground! . . .
I jes' don't *keer!*—I've done my sheer
O' sweatin'!—Anyhow,
In this dad-blasted weather here,
I'm not a-workin' *now!*

The corn and wheat and all
Is doin' well enough!—
They' got clean on from now tel Fall
To show what kind o' stuff
'At's in their *own* dad-burn backbone;
So, while the Scriptur's 'low
Man ort to reap as he have sown—
I'm not a-workin' now!

The grass en-nunder these-
  Here ellums 'long "Old Blue,"
And shadders o' the sugar-trees,
  Beats farmin' quite a few!
As feller says,—I ruther guess
  I'll make my comp'ny-bow
And *snooze* a few hours—more er less.—
  I'm not a-workin' now!

## BUB SAYS

THE moon in the sky is a custard-pie,
An' the clouds is the cream pour'd o'er it,
An' all o' the glittering stars in the sky
Is the powdered-sugar for it.

. . . . . .

JOHNTS—he's proudest boy in town—
'Cause his Mommy she cut down
His Pa's pants fer Johnts—an' there
Is 'nuff left fer *'nother* pair!

. . . . . .

ONE time, when her Ma was gone,
Little Elsie she put on
All her Ma's fine clothes—an' black
Grow-grain-silk, an' sealskin-sack;
Nen while she wuz flouncin' out
In the hall an' round about,

Some one knocked, an' Elsie she
Clean forgot an' run to see
Who's there at the door—an' saw
Mighty quick it wuz her Ma.
But ef she ain't saw at all,
She'd a-knowed her parasol!

. . . . . .

Gran'pas an' Gran'mas is funniest folks!—
Don't be jolly, ner tell no jokes,
Tell o' the weather an' frost an' snow
O' that cold New Year's o' long-ago;
An' then they sigh at each other an' cough
An' talk about suddently droppin' off.

## THE POOR STUDENT

With song elate we celebrate
  The struggling Student wight,
Who seeketh still to pack his pate
  With treasures erudite;
Who keepeth guard and watch and ward
  O'er every hour of day,
Nor less to slight the hours of night,
  He watchful is alway.

Though poor in pence, a wealth of sense
  He storeth in excess—
With poverty in opulence,
  His needs wax never less:
His goods are few,—a shelf or two
  Of classics, and a chair—
A banjo—with a bird's-eye view
  Of back-lots everywhere.

In midnight gloom, shut in his room,
  His vigils he protracts,
E'en to the morning's hectic bloom,
  Accumulating facts:

And yet, despite or wrong or right,
He nurtureth a ban,—
He hath the stanchless appetite
Of any hirèd man.

On Jason's fleece and storied Greece
He feeds his hungry mind;
Then stuffs himself like a valise
With "eats" of any kind:
With kings he feigns he feasts, and drains
The wines of ages gone—
Then husks a herring's cold remains
And turns the hydrant on.

In Trojan mail he fronts the gale
Of ancient battle-rout,
When, 'las the hour! his pipe must fail,
And his last "snipe" smush out—
Nor pauses he, unless it be
To quote some cryptic scroll
And poise a sardine pensively
O'er his immortal soul.

## UNCLE SIDNEY'S RHYMES

LITTLE Rapacity Greed was a glutton:
He'd eat any meat, from goose-livers to mutton;
All fowl, flesh, or sausage with all savors through
it—
You never saw sausage stuffed as *he* could do it!
His nice mamma owned, "O he eats as none other
Than animal kind;" and his bright little brother
Sighed, pained to admit a phrase non-eulogistic,
"Rap eats like a—pardon me—Cannibalistic."
"He eats—like a *boor,*" said his sister—"a shame-
less
Plebeian, in sooth, of an ancestry nameless!"
"He eats," moaned his father, despairingly placid
And hopeless,—"he eats like—he eats like an
acid!"

## "BLUE-MONDAY" AT THE SHOE SHOP

[IN THE EARLY SEVENTIES]

Oh, if we had a rich boss
  Who liked to have us rest,
With a dime's lift for a benchmate
  Financially distressed,—
A boss that's been a "jour." himself
  And ain't forgot the pain
Of restin' one day in the week,
  Then back to work againe!

*Chorus*

*Ho, it's hard times together,*
  *We've had 'em, you and I,*
*In all kinds of weather,*
  *Let it be wet or dry;*
*But I'm bound to earn my livelihood*
  *Or lay me down and die!*

Poverty compels me
To face the snow and sleet,—
For poor wife and children
Must have a crust to eat.—
The sad wail of hunger
It would drive me insane,
If it wasn't for Blue-Monday
When I git to work againe!

*Chorus*

*Ho, it's hard times together,*
*We've had 'em, you and I,*
*In all kinds of weather,*
*Let it be wet or dry;*
*But I'm bound to earn my livelihood*
*Or lay me down and die!*

Then it's stoke up the stove, Boss,
And drive off the damps:
Cut out me tops, Boss,
And lend me your clamps;—
Pass us your tobacky
Till I give me pipe a start. . . .
Lor', Boss! how we love ye
For your warm kynd heart!

*Chorus*

*Ho, it's hard times together,*
*We've had 'em, you and I,*
*In all kinds of weather,*
*Let it be wet or dry;*
*But I'm bound to earn my livelihood*
*Or lay me down and die!*

## THE THOUGHTS OF YOUTH

### The Boys'

The lisping maid,
In shine and shade
Half elfin and half human,
We love as such—
Yet twice as much
Will she be loved as woman.

### The Girls'

The boy we see,
Of two or three—
Or even as a baby,
We love to kiss
For what he is,
Yet more for what he may be.

## IT'S *GOT* TO BE

"When it's *got* to be,"—like I always say,
As I notice the years whiz past,
And know each day is a yesterday,
When we size it up, at last,—
Same as I said when my boyhood went
And I knowed *we* had to quit,—
"It's *got* to be, and it's *goin'* to be!"—
So I said "Good-by" to *it*.

It's *got* to be, and it's *goin'* to be!
So at least I always try
To kind o' say in a hearty way,—
"Well, it's *got* to be. Good-by!"

The time just melts like a late, last snow,—
When it's *got* to be, it melts!
But I aim to keep a cheerful mind,
Ef I can't keep nothin' else!
I knowed, when I come to twenty-one,
That I'd soon be twenty-two,—
So I waved one hand at the soft young man,
And I said, "Good-by to *you!*"

It's *got* to be, and it's *goin'* to be!
So at least I always try
To kind o' say, in a cheerful way,—
"Well, it's *got* to be.—Good-by!"

They kep' a-goin', the years and years,
Yet still I smiled and smiled,—
For I'd said "Good-by" to my single life,
And I had a wife and child:
Mother and son and the father—one,—
Till, last, on her bed of pain,
She jes' smiled up, like she always done,—
And I said "Good-by" again.

It's *got* to be, and it's *goin'* to be!
So at least I always try
To kind o' say, in a humble way,—
"Well, it's *got* to be. Good-by!"

And then my boy—as he growed to be
Almost a man in size,—
Was more than a pride and joy to me,
With his mother's smilin' eyes.—

He gimme the slip, when the War broke out,
And followed me. And I
Never knowed till the first fight's end . . .
I found him, and then, . . . "Good-by."

It's *got* to be, and it's *goin'* to be!
So at least I always try
To kind o' say, in a patient way,
"Well, it's *got* to be. Good-by!"

I have said, "Good-by!—Good-by!—Good-by!"
With my very best good will,
All through life from the first,—and I
Am a cheerful old man still:
But it's *got* to end, and it's *goin'* to end!
And this is the thing I'll do,—
With my last breath I will laugh, O Death,
And say "Good-by" to *you!* . . .

It's *got* to be! And again I say,—
When his old scythe circles high,
I'll laugh—of course, in the kindest way,—
As I say "Good-by!—Good-by!"

## HOOSIER SPRING-POETRY

When ever'thing's a-goin' like she's got-a-goin' now,—
The maple-sap a-drippin', and the buds on ever' bough
A-sorto' reachin' up'ards all a-trimblin', ever' one,
Like 'bout a million brownie-fists a-shakin' at the sun!
The childern wants their shoes off 'fore their breakfast, and the Spring
Is here so good-and-plenty that the old hen has to sing!—
When things is goin' *thisaway,* w'y, that's the sign, you know,
That ever'thing's a-goin' like we like to see her go!

Oh, ever'thing's a-goin' like we like to see her go!
Old Winter's up and dusted, with his dratted frost and snow—

The ice is out the crick ag'in, the freeze is out the ground,
And you'll see faces thawin' too ef you'll jes look around!—
The bluebird's landin' home ag'in, and glad to git the chance,
'Cause here's where he belongs at, that's a settled circumstance!
And him and mister robin now's a-chunin' fer the show.
Oh, ever'thing's a-goin' like we like to see her go!

The sun ain't jes' p'tendin' *now!*—The ba'm is in the breeze—
The trees'll soon be green as grass, and grass as green as trees;
The buds is all jes *eechin',* and the dogwood down the run
Is bound to bust out laughin' 'fore another week is done;
The bees is wakin', gap'y-like, and fumblin' fer their buzz,

A-thinkin', ever-wakefuler, of other days that
wuz,—
When all the land wuz orchard-blooms and
clover, don't you know. . . .
Oh, ever'thing's a-goin' like we like to see her
go!